



# NEW JERSEY FIELD OFFICE

## FIELD NOTES

### SEPTEMBER 2015



#### **The Last Fledgling** **By Eric Schrading**

On August 17, 2015, the last New Jersey Piping Plover chick in the State fledged and it looks as though New Jersey will end up with a 1.27 fledglings/pair and 108 pairs, up from an all-time low in New Jersey last year of 92 pairs. Productivity hopefully will sustain or advance the population increase next year. The numbers are still preliminary. In addition most of the production was at two locations (Sandy Hook and Holgate), so there remains a concern that all of the piping plover output in New Jersey is coming from limited geographic areas. Congressional Districts: 2, 3, 4 and 6.

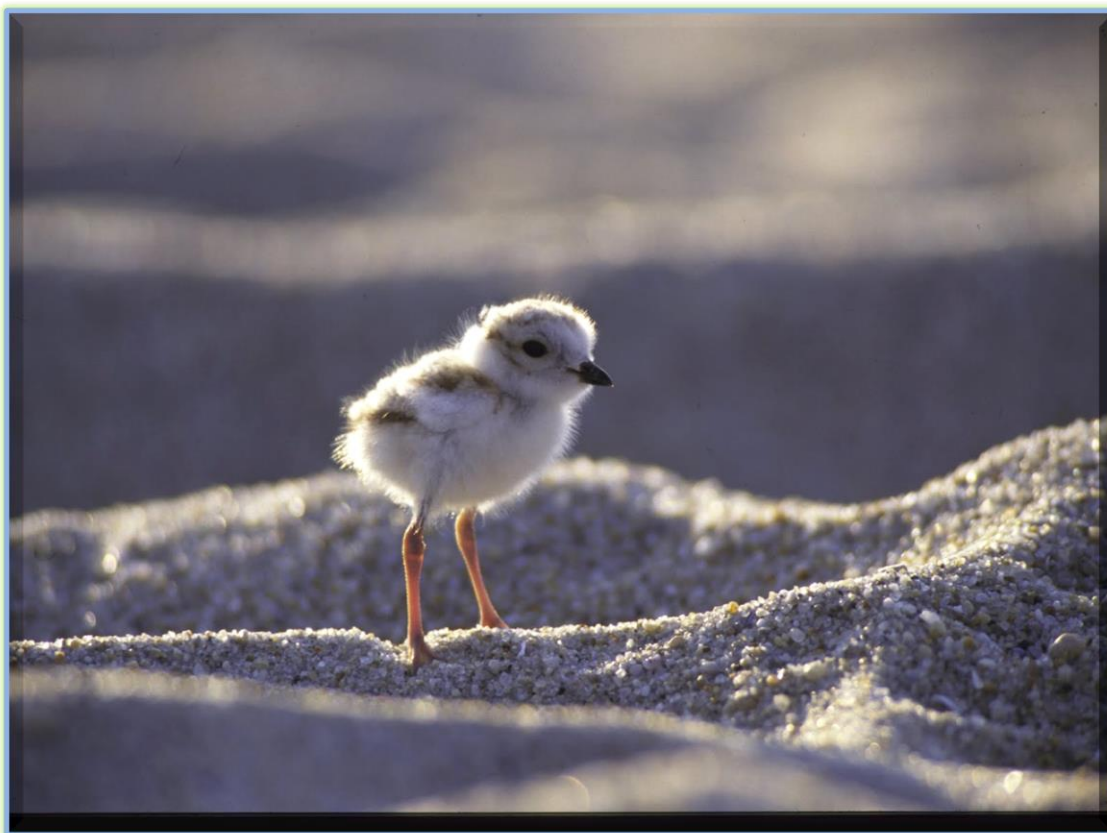


Photo Credit: USFWS



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#### Master Gardeners Program

By Amber Rhodes

Pathways Intern Amber Rhodes in the Partners program, gave a talk to approximately 50 people in the Master Gardeners program in Monmouth County this week. The talk focused on common invasive plants of New Jersey, as well as the advantages of good native gardening alternatives and practices. The talk also focused on the importance of native plants to pollinators in different parts of their life cycles. Partners biologists occasionally give talks to Master Gardeners groups in New Jersey to educate people about the Service and to influence Master Gardeners volunteers who have extensive opportunities to interact with the public and influence their decisions about plant selection. Congressional District 4

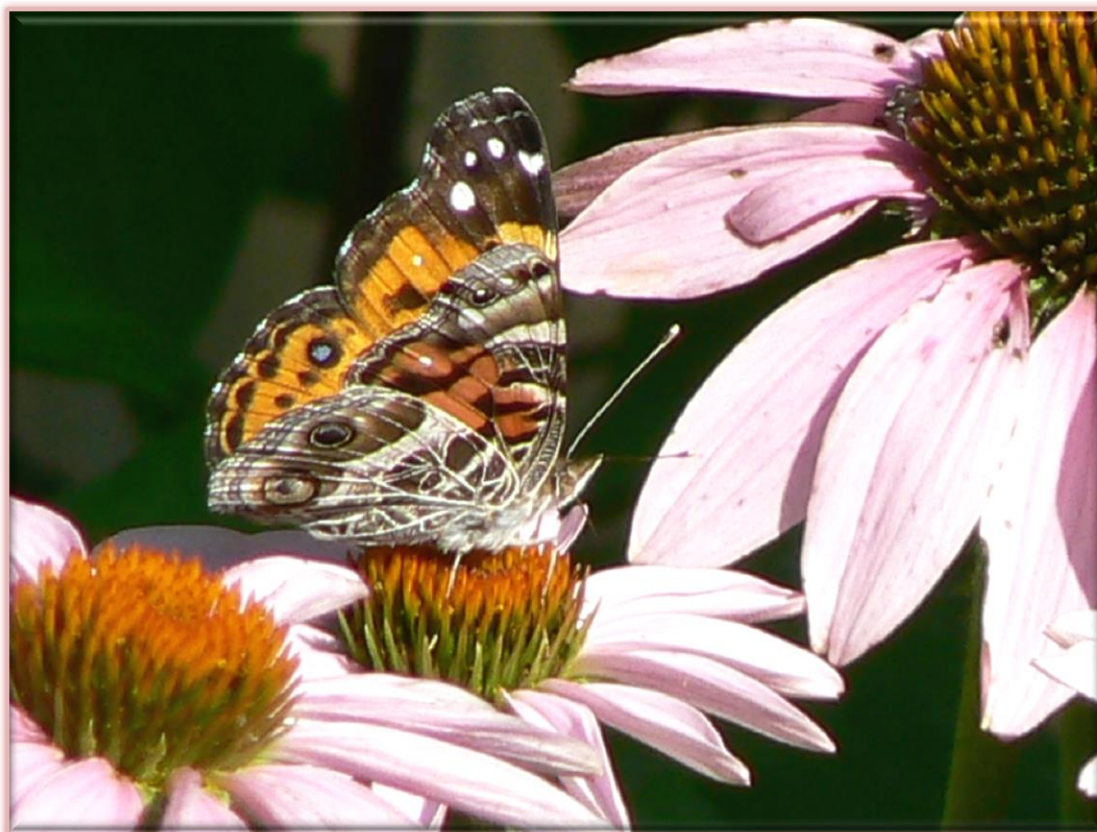


Photo Credit: Laura Perlick, USFWS



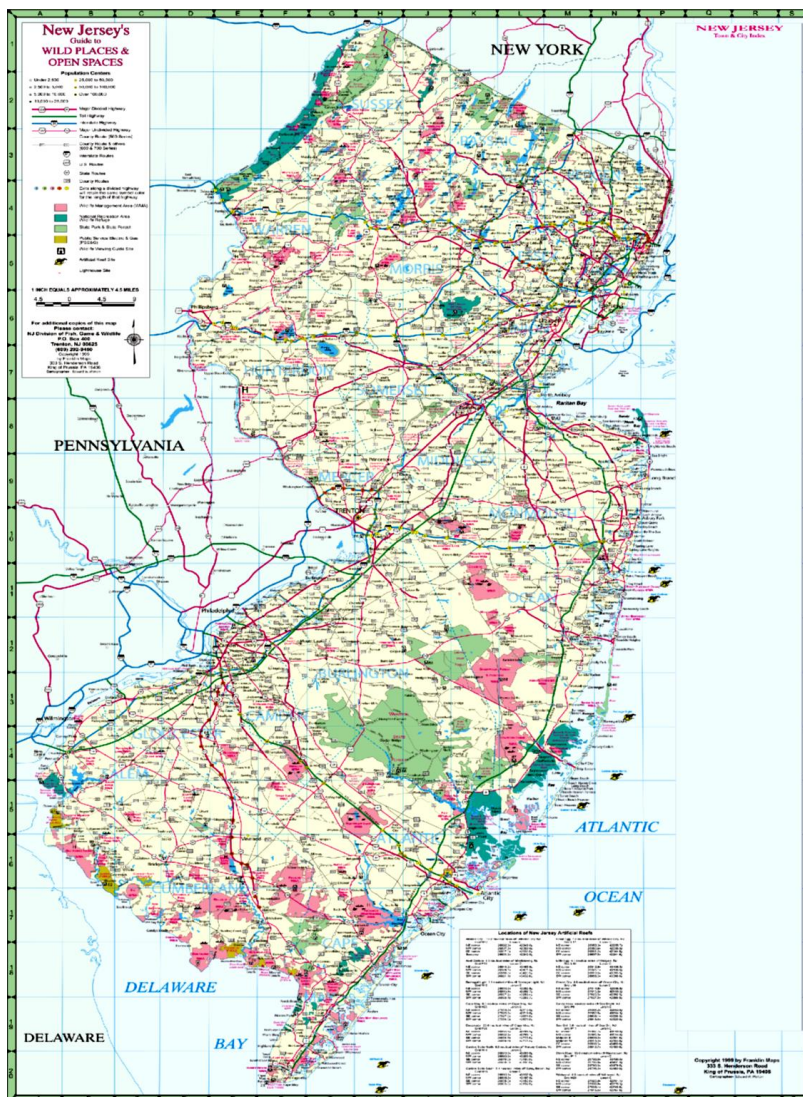


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## ESA Section 7 Summary By Dennis Hamlin

On Aug 27 Dennis Hamlin (NJFO) and Glenn Smith (RO) did a summary of the ESA, specifically Section 7 at the HUD office in NYC. This is particularly important since HUD has a large amount of Hurricane Sandy funding for various projects. The presentation lasted all day and included an overview of ESA, Section 7, IPac, and the NJFO website. There were 24 attendees, from HUD (4), NJDCA (2), NJDEP (2), NJHMFA, NYC OMB (6), representatives from cities/counties in NJ, PA, and NY, and several consulting firms. Everyone was appreciative of the information, and there was a wide range of people who promised to spread the word. Congressional District: All





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#### Aquatic Invasive Species Detail

By Cathy Marion

Contaminants biologist Cathy Marion spent 5 days with Aquatic Invasive Species staff from the Lower Great Lakes Fishery Resources Office sampling for Eurasian ruffe (*Gymnocephalus cernuus*) in Lake Erie. Eurasian ruffe are a non-native invasive species endemic to Europe and Asia. Ruffe were introduced to the upper Great Lakes through the ballast water from ocean-going vessels, and are known to compete with native fishes for food and habitat. The ruffe has not yet been captured in the lower Great Lakes (Lakes Erie, Ontario), therefore early detection and tracking of the ruffe population is an important component of limiting the spread of this species. Biologists used benthic trawls to sample for ruffe in several large harbors adjacent to Lake Erie. These harbors are at highest risk of ruffe invasion through ballast water transfer from within the Great Lakes. Fortunately, no ruffe were captured. Biologists did encounter numerous species endemic to Lake Erie, including: white perch, walleye, yellow perch, trout perch, emerald shiner, spottail shiner, rainbow smelt, channel catfish, gizzard shad, alewife, white bass, black crappie, bluegill, rock bass, and freshwater drum.

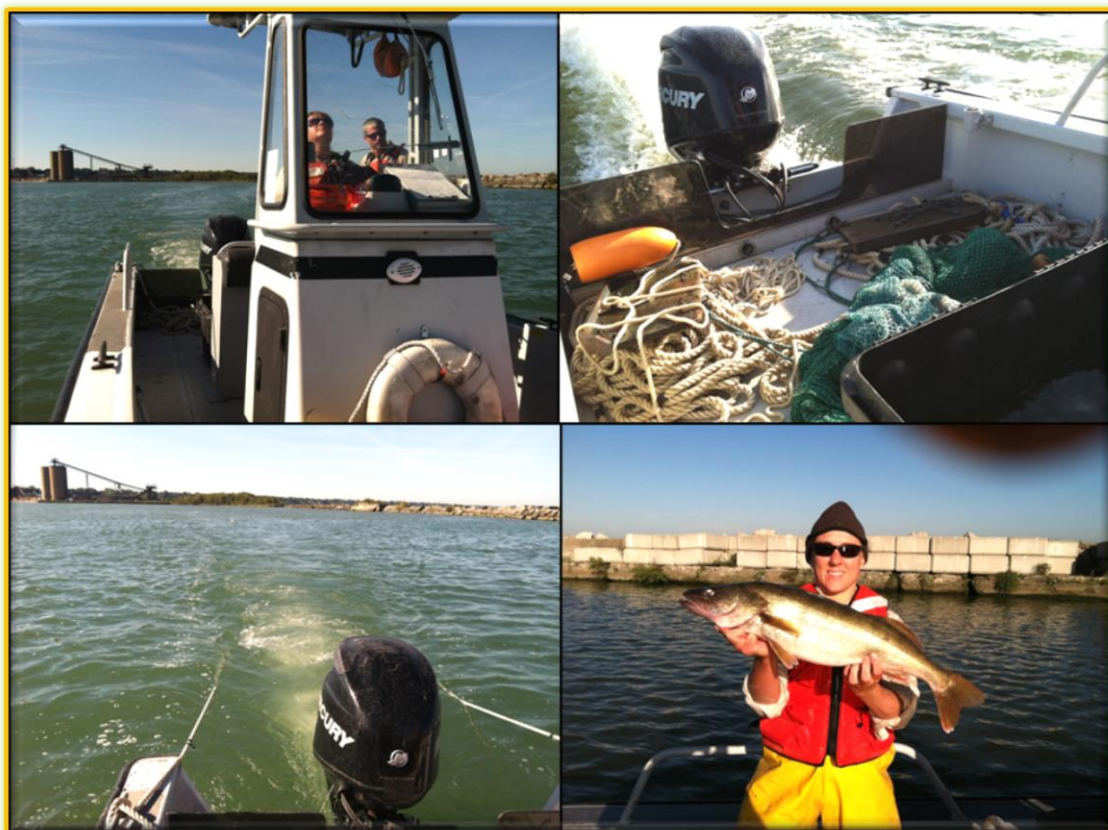


Photo Credit: Cathy Marion, USFWS